

It is time to understand that preserving, protecting, and defending our auto industry doesn't just solve a Michigan problem, it solves an American problem, and it defends jobs in every community in our great Nation.

It is a shame, Madam Speaker, that we had to learn this lesson on the backs and the livelihoods of another 40,000 of our fellow Americans.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Nevada (Ms. BERKLEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. BERKLEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

□ 1715

EMBRACE MARRIAGE EQUALITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maine (Ms. PINGREE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. PINGREE of Maine. Today I want to recognize some actions in my home State. Last week Maine became the fifth State in the country to embrace marriage equality.

Same-sex couples live all over our State in loving, committed relationships, raising families and growing old together, yet they have not been afforded the rights and responsibilities that come with marriage. Last week our legislature took a major step towards correcting that injustice.

In the week leading up to the vote, thousands of people filled the Augusta Civic Center to testify on the marriage equality bill. People came from all over our State, men and women, straight and gay, young and old, couples and single people. Many of them waited hours for their turn to speak. When they got to the microphone, the overwhelming majority said it was time for Maine to recognize same-sex marriage.

Maine moved the country one step closer to federally recognizing and protecting the right for two people, regardless of their gender, to be married. Maine has always been an independent State with a forward-looking legislative body and citizens with common sense.

I stand here today to congratulate my home State on the passage of this landmark victory.

The landmark victory didn't come easily or without long debate. Many personal journeys began and ended with this lengthy discussion.

My daughter happens to be the Speaker of the House, and she shared her own personal story, which, with pride, I would like to share a few of her words which reflected our family's feelings. She said, when she got up to testify, "This issue was brought home for me two summers ago when my husband and I were married. Our island pastor was on a trip abroad and unavailable to perform our wedding ceremony. My

husband and I wanted to be married by someone we knew and trusted. We asked a good family friend to perform our wedding; we knew his tone, his presence, and his sense of humor would be perfect. He was honored to do it, and we immediately got to work planning the ceremony. Throughout the preparations for the wedding, he gave us honest and valuable advice about the joys and challenges of a lifetime of commitment to another person. He gave us some of the best advice either of us has ever received about marriage.

"As we drove away from our wedding rehearsal, all of us happy and relieved that everything seemed to be going well, my friend said to me, 'I am honored to perform your wedding. It is going to be great. But it is important to understand that you and Jason have the right to do something very special, and it's a right that I don't have. The friend that married us is a gay man who has been living in a committed and loving relationship with the same man for more than 30 years.

"I was struck in that moment that a person whom I respected and trusted, a person as close to me as some of my dearest relatives, a person whose relationship was a model for trust, compassion, longevity, was legally denied a right and status that my husband and I were about to be granted. There is nothing fair about giving some committed couples in Maine the right to the legal responsibilities and privileges of marriage and denying it to others."

That was my daughter, Hannah, the Speaker of the House's story, and one that held great meaning to my family and to so many of us across Maine as we considered the plight of many of our friends in committed relationships who haven't been allowed the right to make it legal.

When the deliberation ended at the public hearing and it was time to vote, many of Maine's State legislators found themselves in new territory. As Governor Baldacci made clear just after signing the marriage equity bill into law, he said, "In the past, I opposed gay marriage while supporting the idea of civil unions. I have come to believe that this is a question of fairness and of equal protection under the law, and that a civil union is not equal to civil marriage."

Madam Speaker, as we in this body consider the future of issues of equality, it is important that we all take a moment to reflect on the history that was made in Augusta, Maine, this month. Eighty-nine State representatives, 21 State senators, and one Governor put themselves on record supporting fairness and equality, and one more State voted to do the right thing.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MORAN of Kansas addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. KAPTUR addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MCHENRY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. QUIGLEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. QUIGLEY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. FORTENBERRY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HONORING NEUMANN COLLEGE ACHIEVING UNIVERSITY STATUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SESTAK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SESTAK. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor a remarkable institution of higher education focused on developing graduates, who understand that true reward comes not only through acquiring knowledge, but also the use of that knowledge in the service of others.

In the fall of 1965, the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia opened Our Lady of Angels College, based in both liberal arts and Franciscan traditions, with just 115 female students in Aston, Pennsylvania. In 1980, male students were admitted for the first time and the board of trustees approved changing the college's name to Neumann as a tribute to the significant role former Bishop, and now St. John, Neumann played in the order's early formation.

Forty-four years later, through the tireless efforts of the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia and their many supporters, the Seventh Congressional District of Pennsylvania is home to a new university. On April 30, the Pennsylvania Department of Education recognized more than 2 years of research, planning, applications, and campus